United Nations A/CONF.199/PC/Misc.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 February 2002

Original: English

**Commission on Sustainable Development
acting as the preparatory committee for the
World Summit on Sustainable Development**
Third preparatory session
25 March-5 April 2002

Report of the Alliance of Small Island States Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development the report of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

02-25214 (E) 210302

The meeting was held at the M Hotel, Singapore from 7 to 11 January 2002. It was organized by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Small Island Developing States Unit (SIDS Unit) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). A significant financial contribution was made by the Singapore Government and the United Nations Development Program Capacity 21, and by DESA and the Government of Norway, towards the successful convening of the meeting.

Proceedings

The **opening ceremony** was presided over by H.E. Professor Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore. In his opening remarks Ambassador Koh spoke of the long history of sustainable development negotiations, and the difficult issues that had to be faced at the Rio Summit in 1992. The need to articulate the concerns of small island developing States (SIDS) was vital, and SIDS could learn a lot from the experiences of other SIDS. The group of countries that made up AOSIS possess remarkable human and technical capacities that could be shared for common benefit. The report of the meeting should highlight the successes, the best practices and the way forward for sustainable development of SIDS. We should all be inspired to greater work as a result of the cooperation among SIDS.

H.E. Ambassador Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations and Chairman of AOSIS, spoke on behalf of the group in expressing appreciation to the Government of Singapore for hosting the meeting. The warm welcome received by delegations augured well for the success of the meeting, as did the eminent leadership of the Singapore delegation under Ambassador Koh. He noted the presence of so many experts and leading personalities from the communities of AOSIS, as well as the NGOs and regional organizations that were present. Much was at stake in the WSSD process, and AOSIS must grasp the opportunity to maximize the impact of its views on the upcoming negotiations. AOSIS should build on its greatest strength - the people of SIDS - and in this way seek to overcome the inherent difficulties that SIDS face. AOSIS needed also to focus on demonstrating to the international community the validity of the claim for SIDS as a special case for sustainable development. He also expressed deep appreciation to UNDP, UN/DESA and to the Government of Norway for the financial contribution and technical assistance rendered.

H.E.The Honourable Lim Swee Say, Minister for the Environment of Singapore, welcomed all participants to Singapore and spoke of the importance of sustainable development for SIDS. The difficulties faced by SIDS were not insurmountable, even if the challenges of globalization often loomed large. The common background of SIDS and their representatives should allow for greater cooperation and sharing of experiences. Singapore had sought to further sustainable development in both spirit and in deed. With limited natural resources, policies required structuring in such a way as to realize economic growth while maintaining social goals and promoting environmental

protection. Building on partnerships between the 3 P's - people sector, public sector and private sector, Singapore had been able to achieve great successes in developing the country, the population and the economy. Singapore was willing and able to share its experience with other SIDS and developing countries, and had been involved in technical cooperation programs for many years. During the meeting participants would be exposed to the SIDS Technical Cooperation Program (SIDSTec) which was launched by Singapore in 1999. The Minister concluded by stressing the need for AOSIS to grasp this opportunity for promoting a shared vision for sustainable development of SIDS.

There followed a cultural presentation of great interest and inspiration.

Session 1
The perspectives of the SIDS regions

The session was chaired by Ambassador Koh. The agenda was adopted following a request to include provision for discussions on trade and sustainable development in the post-Doha scenario.

Ms Gricel Acosta Acosta (Cuba) presented on the **Caribbean perspectives**, based on the outcome of the meeting held in Havana in June 2001. She stated that many of the SIDS in the Caribbean region had experienced technical and financial difficulties in preparing for that meeting, so that the countries were not all able to articulate their priorities. Only a few had finalized their national assessment reports. At the subsequent meeting at the Latin American and Caribbean (GRULAC) level, there had been some progress, which she would seek to include in her presentation. The Havana meeting reaffirmed Agenda 21 and the Barbados Program of Action for the sustainable development of small island States (BPOA), as well as the Declaration of the Forum of Environment Ministers of the GRULAC Region. The deterioration of the marine environment was of great concern to the region. Globalization was not giving the same benefits to all the countries, and the continued vulnerability of the region and lack of accepted criteria for determining vulnerability was highlighted. Reduction of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change were seen as important. The region was keen to see an integrated approach to management of the Caribbean Sea in the context of sustainable development. The implementation of the Kyoto Protocol was stressed, as was the need for a renewed commitment for financial and technical resources. The region recognized and made a strong recommendation for the linkages of policies and measures for sustainable development. The region would also like to extend regional dialogue and strengthening of intra-regional cooperation. Recognition of the special situation of SIDS would be imperative. Equally important was the strengthening of capacity building through SIDS-SIDS cooperation, and AOSIS needed to consider how to raise the funds and resources to implement such cooperative programs with the assistance of the international community.

Ms Karibaiti Teatabo (Kiribati) described the outcomes of the **Pacific Sub-Regional** Multi-stakeholder Preparatory meeting in September 2001, in Apia, Samoa that she had chaired. The outcomes had later been submitted to Asia and Pacific Regional Meeting in

Cambodia in November 2001. She highlighted the main issues that emerged from the Apia meeting, linking them to the results from the Cambodia process. She said the region had also experienced technical and financial difficulties in producing national assessments for WSSD. Agreement had been reached at the Apia meeting to put forward certain priorities which would be developed and elaborated further in the course of the preparatory process. These initiatives were captured by the Asia Pacific meeting to a large extent, and focused on capacity building, poverty reduction, sustainable energy, biodiversity conservation and management, freshwater, oceans and coasts, and climate change. In addition, issues relating to financing for sustainable development efforts was seen as an important matter.

Ms Myroula Hadjichristophorou (Cyprus) addressed the need to pursue environmental policy integration in all government policies. For **Cyprus** this had required proper readjustment of the organizational framework of government action, and incentives for regulatory measures. The role of government services was gradually being reinforced, and many strategies were in place in several sectors and to prevent pollution from various productions. A number of measures were being considered for district level action, such as local level monitoring. There had also been a need for aligning policies with the various EU directives, such as a comprehensive system for environmental impact assessments. Environmental auditing and quality control was accrediting a definition of quality of products also in terms of the environment. Access to information was guaranteed by new legislation, and a State of the Environment report would be published every two years. The results were expected to promote a more rational use of the land resources and space.

Ms Sandrine Valere (Mauritius) stated that the **African region** had met at several sub-regional sessions, one of which was held in Mauritius. The work had been integrated in an African joint position. Africa had identified poverty reduction as being of primary importance. Promotion of access for developing countries products was one way of assisting Africa, as had integrated approaches to enhancement of standards of living and the reduction of environmental risk. Africa had also identified the need to look at the health and social conditions of the countries, and the need to involve the younger generation, and hence need for education of all, especially for girls. Access to finance and technical cooperation remained high priorities to assure success. Mauritius saw an urgent need to promote the implementation of the BPOA. The issues relating to the extreme vulnerability of SIDS must be addressed in the WSSD, and it was a fundamental concern that SIDS should seek a common position.

Mr Ravi Sawhney (ESCAP) was requested by the Chairman to say a few words about the **Asia Pacific regional process**. Mr Sawhney said the common elements between the SIDS regions were obvious and not unexpected. The reiteration of Pacific priorities at Phnom Penh was effective. The follow-up action for the regional platform required work on the seven initiatives agreed at Phnom Penh. Especially with respect to capacity building, it was clear there had been some failure in getting the national capacities strengthened sufficiently. This had regional dimensions. Poverty reduction also required

attention for the achievement of sustainable development, as indeed the effective implementation of programmes relating to the oceans and its resources.

Questions and comments were raised by Jamaica, Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago.

In the **discussions**, the protection of cultural and intellectual resources of SIDS was raised. It was agreed that this important issue required further work, as it had only been dealt with in brief at the Asia Pacific meeting and at the eminent persons meeting in Barbados. The common elements among SIDS needed to be stressed. They posed significant constraints to sustainable development and had to be more widely understood and acknowledged. The importance of sustaining AOSIS, building on the special case for SIDS, must not be lost in the international discussions. The potential of AOSIS for the unity of SIDS was recognized. AOSIS must focus on efforts to overcome SIDS constraints and to work with the resources available. It is not necessary to be defensive when dealing with the rest of the world on these issues.

Session 2
The perspectives of the SIDS regions (contd.): WSSD preparations

Ambassador Slade chaired the session. He stated that this should be seen as a continuation of the morning's discussion on regional perspectives.

Mr Manuel B. Dengo (DESA) explained that the development of the **UN Secretary General's report** had followed the preparations undertaken in all regions for the WSSD. There had been a great deal of activities in the regions, in recognition of the fact that the Rio Summit had set a very broad agenda, and that implementation had proved difficult. It had been difficult to find the concrete measures that would allow any claim with certainty that there were actual sustainable development actions in place, in a broader sense, rather than specific limited sectoral steps. Regional platforms had been developed. The stakeholders had also become involved in preparations. WSSD was at a critical juncture, as there were very important concerns that had not been addressed. There had not been sufficient focus on the social aspects. The statement in the Millennium Declaration on poverty and on safe drinking water could be viewed as distinct goals, but they also required supporting commitments and actions. The identification of concrete steps towards securing these goals was now required. The plight of the world's poor must be addressed, especially the constraints being placed on their natural resources by forces such as desertification, climate change, etc. There were four main areas where the WSSD needed to produce results. First, sustainable development must be made operational, through actions that will lead to sustainable development. A second area was the management of globalization, which had aspects of trade related impacts of multilateral agreements. A third area was the financial resources required for sustainable development. The fourth area was the management and sustainable conservation of natural resources, and seeking concrete examples of how to implement sustainable development goals. It was acknowledged that political will, practical steps and partnerships were necessary. Look at the situation in a "what, who and how" dimension,

as stated in Secretary General's report. The Secretary General had tried to capture the essential issues from the preparations. What was needed now was the identification of the anchor points for the SIDS agenda, and to extract from the Secretary General's report the areas where SIDS can input their strong concerns.

Ms Diane Quarless (Jamaica) stated that the **WSSD PrepCOM Bureau,** of which Jamaica was a member, had sought to raise awareness of the WSSD and to participate in the relevant preparatory meetings. The Bureau had sought to nurture a bottom up approach, and participation by all stakeholders. By starting at the local level the process had been enriched. But there were limitations of time and capacity, and there was now an urgent need for the national assessments to be completed. This would give greater certainty to the identification of what the constraints were, and the priorities. The role of UNEP, while important, had been seen as stressing a bias towards environment over sustainable development as a whole. The impression was that the process was lacking on the concept of sustainable development as a whole. The Bureau therefore saw the need to meet with the various agencies that act as task managers and getting views on their visions for success at WSSD. UNDP had also acknowledged that there was a need for greater commitment to demonstrating the willingness to assist. The range of health issues had ensured that WHO would become more active. WMO had also brought the climate change dimension forward, and ILO had drawn in the social and labour issues. The involvement of the NGOs and the major groups had been important. The Bureau was expecting a draft document assessing the impact of Rio – the lessons learned. There would also be a negotiated document establishing what the Bureau wanted to do to promote WSSD. There was also a series of targets for national governments and regional groupings – partnership agreements. The substance of such documents must be based on more than spontaneous initiatives, and contain agreements on the means of implementation. If this were to be adopted in WSSD there was certainly a need to have the concerns of SIDS included. SIDS as a group also needed to look at the proposal for a High Representative for LDCs, land-locked countries and SIDS. While it was well known that Governments were having difficulty in establishing an integrated sustainable development policy, since the support was rather compartmentalized, there was need to look at how to monitor, implement and achieve sustainable development. Above all, for SIDS, it must be demonstrated that they were engaged and were willing to push for the most important issues.

Ms Donna Forde (Barbados), reporting on the preparations of the **Group of 77 and China** (G-77), stressed that she was not speaking on behalf of the G-77. She said that she had not attended all G.77 meetings, and could speak to some only of the group's preparations. The G-77 had made an initial statement on the process so far. There was indeed a lack of mention of the SIDS issues, but there was still the opportunity to get the points across. This required that the AOSIS group in New York actively took part in the G-77 discussions. The African group had been very active so far, and AOSIS needed to do the same. The mention in the G-77 text of the new initiatives for development in Africa shows this. The establishment of the High Representative office for LDCs had not curtailed the drive from LDCs to push their own concerns. AOSIS would therefore need a strategy and negotiating approach, as every year there were considerable attempts to roll

back the gains made by SIDS. There was a lot at stake, and as a practical way forward the group should allocate coordinators for different topics and issues.

Questions and comments were raised by Mauritius, Dominica, Grenada, Belize, Solomon Islands and Saint Lucia.

In the **discussions,** the need for a division of labour between AOSIS delegations was supported. Since national administrations were structured sectorally, there was need to seek ways of overcoming this situation to bring together for example the trade and sustainable development agencies of government to discuss WSSD. It was also noted that the preparatory process had been lacking in getting information to the national level. A lot of issues had been discussed in other organizations. To avoid continuing a fragmented approach, it was necessary to seek informative means of disseminating the outputs of other meetings. Certain issues tended to get swept away in discussions with bigger groups, so AOSIS should use all the avenues available. Financing for development was raised at a ministerial conference to assist developing countries assimilate in the world trade system. Agencies should help SIDS with the liberalization process. While using the different opportunities available, it was especially necessary to participate fully at the UN. Johannesburg must include the views of the groups such as AOSIS, while AOSIS must show the political will, give the practical examples and seek new partnerships. The results for the AOSIS countries must be made more meaningful. It was acknowledged that the difficulties that SIDS faced in the negotiations were real physical problems.

Mr Gerald Miles (South Pacific Regional Environment Program - **SPREP)** noted that the Millennium Declaration was important to the WSSD because it referred to development goals as well as to the needs of SIDS. There were also the sub-regional platforms to be considered, as well as the reports from the preparatory meetings. There were the specific issue meetings like oceans, freshwater, etc. The possibility for a Johannesburg Plan of Action had been spoken about, and many of the issues from the Secretary General's report had been mentioned in the SIDS regions. But there was not a big SIDS footprint in the Secretary General's report. There was some coverage of tourism, disasters and climate, but no translation of the implementation of BPOA in the document. Few specific initiatives were suggested and none for SIDS specifically. There was a lack of the time-bound targets for SIDS. In this regard a clear reference to the 2004 BPOA review would be needed. The four specific issues of oceans and coastal management, vulnerability, climate change and adaptation, capacity building and development had to receive a greater degree of SIDS specific consideration. These issues were not seen in the Secretary General's report as specifically addressing SIDS concerns, and required a significant amount of work if we are going to get these points included in the same way that globalization was included.

Ms Anya Thomas (Caribbean Community - **CARICOM)** stated that the historical progress was well known, as were the issues posed by globalization, and there was a need for new management procedures integrating sustainable development. Coastal priorities, work on tourism and on renewable energy were clearly cutting across the SIDS regions as priorities. It was known that SIDS had common themes to be pursued, such as climate

change, natural disasters, coastal and marine resources, and knowledge and technology for sustainable development. At the end of the day the sustainable development of a country depended on political will and support. This could be facilitated by a better international environment to support SIDS own enabling environment at the national level. An enabling financial environment was also important. The International Conference on Financing for Development would be an important opportunity for such work to commence.

Mr Raj Mohabeer (Indian Ocean Commission - **IOC**) noted that SIDS would need very concrete proposals for the process to succeed, so as to focus from now to maximizing benefits from the WSSD summit. A collective statement of what was the most important aspect to sustainable development of SIDS could be one such proposal. He suggested that a group of SIDS experts consult at the national level and validate the inputs from the regions, and then organize a meeting prior to WSSD with a final declaration with initiatives. There would also be a need to include the input from the technical and expert levels.

Questions and comments were raised by Papua New Guinea, Dominica, Jamaica, Barbados and Tuvalu, and by ECLAC.

The **discussions** focused on the need for coherence and unifying positions among SIDS. It was noted that there was a clear indication that sustainable development policies were losing ground. The tendency remained to extract short term gains, with social and long term economic costs being the result, yet experts had difficulties in getting this message across. Materials for countries would be developed and disseminated, so that Government leaders would have the information and were better able to understand the process as well as the examples of what could be done as best practices. Sustainable development was clearly on the radar screens of the officials and ministers in SIDS regions. In the fisheries sector there was great interest, for example, as shown by the oil spill prevention, the coral reef monitoring, and the efforts to monitor the fisheries fleets. An informed public was the most practical way of ensuring that there was political will. There was a major effort to get information to schools on the issues contained in the BPOA. There was also a need to assist Government leaders with the necessary information, and more must be done to bring in stakeholders and get their ideas to the forefront.

Session 3
People – capacity building for sustainable development in SIDS

The session was chaired by **H.E.Ambassador Peter D. Donigi**, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations. The Chairman reminded the participants that the session was devoted to capacity building, a priority issue for all developing countries. He encouraged the participants to seek out aspects unique to and of special importance to SIDS.

Mr Frank Wickham (SPREP) reported on needs assessments at the systemic, institutional and individual levels, and the **experiences from the Pacific**. SPREP had

found that many Pacific SIDS had difficulties in actually implementing their National Environmental Management Strategies (NEMS). It was also known that a lot of capacity building was offered through various projects, such as those funded by GEF. But the problem was how to ensure that project-based capacity building be applied within the overall capacity building framework at the country level. It was also found that there were strong links to basic education as a prerequisite and fundamental grounding for skills development. Inter-governmental organizations needed to monitor the efforts. This process was difficult for countries beyond the project timeframes. Train the trainers programs had been seen as an important process, especially those using civil society stakeholders. There needed to be support for the training institutions, like the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the University of the South Pacific (USP). There must be a continued process of assessment of the efforts through some indicators and monitoring. Only in this way would capacity building be taken more seriously. Support from countries and the regional organizations could be strengthened by setting up centres of excellence, for example for SIDS-SIDS inter-regional networking. He concluded that home grown approaches were needed, using the available expertise from within and amongst SIDS.

Ms Anya Thomas (CARICOM) noted that capacity issues required some defining of the concepts and processes of capacity development. Capacity building was both short term and long term. In the broadest perspective capacity building sought to establish functions that could implement sustainable development. SIDS faced a number of challenges to capacity building, yet these challenges were also areas to be overcome by capacity building, and run the gamut from policy, institutions to individual levels. In the Caribbean there was acceptance of the importance of the issue, and it had been gaining ground in various negotiations with development partners. At present CARICOM was looking at strengthening communication between various government sectors and agencies. In terms of institutions there was a great need for strengthening the coordinating role, and for establishing integrated and complete databases. At the individual level the development of personal skills and better training programs also needed an integrated policy. The implementation of sustainable development projects required that they be placed in the context of the capacity development process.

Mr Cletus Springer (UNDP Capacity 21) compressed his two presentations into one. He noted that there had been many studies of SIDS vulnerabilities, and always the stress had been on the problems, not the benefits of smallness. The definition of a small state or SIDS had not been completely accepted. To get further acceptance it was necessary to look at the structural issues, not just focus on small populations, or on GDP. Issues relating to these limitations and constraints must be clearly elaborated. Susceptibility to natural disasters combined with small populations created difficulties for insurance. SIDS did not have the ability to hedge in the financial markets. One conclusion was that SIDS required an international forum that would allow them to address issues that were largely part of their domestic agendas, for example through AOSIS. He posed the question whether AOSIS members were prepared to wait for international organizations to complete the work on vulnerability on their behalf. In his view it was in the interest of SIDS to carry these investigations forward. SIDS had problems with the pace of

globalization, which was a conceptual difference to simply stressing difficulties with trade liberalization per se. It was clear that SIDS performed better when they had the preferential treatment. The capacity building initiatives of recent years had resulted in sustainable development councils being created. And it was now clear that SIDS networking and the technical assistance programs required a regional coordinating mechanism for capacity. But there were institutional constraints and problems in fully linking successive programs. On trade issues the Caribbean had a good example in its regional negotiating machinery. Seeking to revive the CARICOM Task Force on sustainable development would be a valuable exercise. But there was a dearth of trained personnel for all countries in the region. An inter-regional training mechanism was required to sustain expertise, and to retain regional experts. He called for an inter-regional task force to be established for different thematic areas, as well as for cross-cutting issues such as capacity building.

Mr Anthony Chang (Singapore - SIDS Technical Assistance Program (SIDSTec)) stated that **Singapore** has been involved in **technical assistance** since the 60s. Singapore had benefited form cooperating with and learning from others in its development history, and now wished to share its only resource - its people. The development process in Singapore offered some lessons. The SIDSTec and other technical assistance programs had been in place for some time and all were available to SIDS. Five hundred officials had been trained so far. The main topics for training related to issues of environment and urban affairs. In the context of the BPOA, SIDSTec covered a multitude of the BPOA chapters. In 1992 the program was first established as a unified support mechanism for all the training offered by different government agencies in Singapore. The program collaborated with international organizations, and was formally announced by Singapore at the UN General Assembly 22nd special session as a contribution to the sustainable development of SIDS. The courses had been designed to meet some of the training needs of SIDS. There was a requirement of co-ownership in terms of sponsoring governments providing the return airfares. SIDSTec was interested to hear from the participants and to get suggestions on how to improve the training to meet the needs of the AOSIS countries. A training calendar would be distributed to all participants.

The Chairman noted that the problem of globalization for SIDS mainly related to its pace, and the resultant outstripping of a country's ability to adjust. Mindsets needed to be adjusted, so as to move away from the idea that we should only be building the public sector - a form of positive privatization. Capacity building had been debated many times, but as it was cross-cutting issue, it was difficult to consider it as a separate topic. The Chairman called for the constructive views of the participants.

Questions and comments were raised by Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Samoa, Palau, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Fiji, Grenada and Haiti, and UWICED and UNDP.

In the **discussions**, the brain drain issue featured prominently. Innovative financing efforts such as the Barbados Facilitation Unit for Returning Nationals had to be considered. A thoughtful approach on capacity building for the negotiations would be

needed. SIDS should stress their special needs, not those general needs applicable to all developing countries. SIDS lacked the critical mass for capacity building to be successful. Problems with capacity building stemmed from more than globalization, as liberalization and technological change were impacting SIDS economies. Any process of economic growth required the appropriate policies at home, such as an holistic approach, a targeted and comprehensive strategy for capacity building. At the global level, the capacity building initiatives of the UNDP and the GEF required the fullest support by AOSIS countries. The evidence showed that there were significant capacity needs, as shown by the UN's review of BPOA. Innovative measures were needed, and in this regard the possibility of an international scientific body for oceans could be useful, such as the dedicated panel of technical and scientific experts set up for climate change. It was noted that in the 70's the Caribbean was in better economic position than Singapore. Like Singapore in those days, AOSIS must identify targets. The question was how do we get to implementation and capacity retention. Singapore made a large investment in education and health, but countries may find this difficult since much of the structural adjustment demanded by donors had resulted in cuts in education. SIDS had not developed their research capacity, causing even greater dependence and indoctrination. SIDSTec was an example of what could be done to move ahead. Globalization was one world view, an economic force that SIDS must deal with. SIDS cannot defeat Goliath using his strategy. Innovation required that we move to other forms of negotiations, to change people's attitudes. It was also noted that being small did not mean SIDS were destined to be poor and destitute. The wealthiest countries in the European Union are the smallest. SIDS needed to be more confident, and have optimism. They were not destined to be poor. There was fear of globalization, but it was a process that cannot be avoided. It was being driven by forces that were outside our control, and it cannot be reversed. There were benefits and challenges, and was largely positive. The more globalized a country became, the more prosperous it would be, and the less corrupt. The downside was that a country could loose completely certain sectors, and thus create instabilities in the economy. The challenge was to prepare fully for all likely eventualities.

Session 4
People – the role of civil society in the sustainable development of SIDS

The session was chaired by **Ambassador Koh**, who noted the role of civil society in sustainable development and good governance, as well as the need to bring the people sector, and public and private sectors together.

Professor Michael Witter (University of the West Indies - UWI) noted that there was **an island perspective** that must be maintained. Many leaders had been students at UWI, for better or worse. He stressed that rapid liberalization had undermined bananas and sugar, and replaced this with a greater dependence on tourism. Tastes had been changed. Waste disposal was a problem. Sustainable development was sustaining the societies, and SIDS should be aware that the incidence of poverty was underestimated. Rapid liberalization and debt, and the effects on poverty and thus the links to sustainable development, meant that SIDS must insist on more time for transitioning. This would involve replenishment of financing for capacity building. While NGOs in the Caribbean

were under-funded and had limited resources, they were sensitive to the priorities of sustainable development, and could be of great assistance to governments. The pressure on voluntarism meant that people did not get involved as much anymore. And SIDS communities needed to look at what they had and see where they had the advantages. Where people were our resource, we must utilize their strengths properly and prevent socially irresponsible behaviour. He noted that there were particular dynamics in small societies. There was a greater personal level of interaction. Layoffs were tragedies. How do you prosecute a neighbour or cousin? Therefore, there was need to put priority on education, and capacity building, and in the post WSSD period there must be an integration of civil society in decision making.

Ms Lolita Gibbons (Palau Conservation Society) noted that **NGOs in the Pacific SIDS** were not necessarily recognized as such. But NGOs had influence in the running of society. Despite strengths and successes, Pacific societies were stressed by rapid development. They were poorly prepared for the changes that will come. Strategic capacity building could be done in partnership. To effect real success for sustainable development of SIDS there was a need to have renewed commitment that must be accompanied by real action. Sustainable development could become reality by taking practical steps, such as waste management. In many places SIDS were competing for space against their own dump sites and parking lots. There were obvious factors that contribute to unsustainable development. There was good reason to put pressure to have a ban on non-biodegradable materials to SIDS, and establish cost sharing of recycling. The tasks ahead were immense, and the number of areas where NGOs needed to become involved were growing. The presence of NGOs at meetings like this must continue.

Ms Patrina Dumaru (Pacific Concerns Resource Centre) spoke from the perspective of a **Pacific regional NGO** working on environment issues and for a nuclear free and independent Pacific. The importance of civil society was often directed at landowners. Communities had long traditions, and also looking at the protection of identity of culture and beliefs. Local groups and churches were increasingly threatened by outside forces of globalization. They were facing the environmental costs of excessive resource depletion. It was absolutely fundamental that traditional knowledge was protected. Shift to mono-culture agriculture had great impact on traditional practices, and while rehabilitation was returning, we must use culture to show how sustainable development could work. The work under the CBD had allowed for some of this emphasis to be made clear, but it needed greater effort if it was to be promoted at the macro level. All preparatory meetings and the Secretary General's report had emphasized partnerships. This had been highlighted by the Pacific region. To a large extent these groups had not had the training to benefit from the assistance that may be available. We needed to practice sustainable development, and to emphasize that in the final analysis the concerns of NGOs were the same as those of the government delegates.

Professor Simon Tay (Singapore) noted that he has been trying to bring the **private sector** to the table for sustainable development. The role of the private sector was one often demonized. Regulation and distrust figured prominently, rather than real partnership. For Singapore the role of trans-national corporations had been seen as

positive. It was true that in many countries the rationality of decision making had often been marked by corrupt practices. Natural resources were often exploited by elite. The role was thus often not a positive one. There must be efficiency and feasibility in the goals set for sustainable development. If our goals were set too high companies would flee or seek to pay under the table. Public accountability was therefore needed. The vulnerability of SIDS communities bred awareness and acuteness. Particularly challenging sustainable development priorities faced all SIDS. Can ecotourism compete with deep sea ports? There was a tendency in SIDS towards dominance by one sector. There was also potential for overwhelming the local private sector from outside. Singapore had tried to find technical solutions to recycling, and to find ways of putting these into a closed cycles for products. Singapore had also sought to set aside a beautiful beach and an island, so that the conservation area could benefit all. In terms of global environmental governance, the system was insufficient for SIDS. The strength of the global system was skewed to the larger countries. Smaller countries may need alternative approaches. The ability to move markets was limited in SIDS. Consumer and shareholder demands did not have as much clout. NGOs needed to communicate across borders so that socially responsible investment can occur. NGOs can emphasize self-regulation to industry - be green and profitable. To monitor this the national level governments must be strengthened for their regulatory functions, and to move to lean and efficient regulatory frameworks. The role of media in this regard was good if it was strong, free yet responsible. Sensationalism had often let us down, and positive stories were not that prevalent. Nevertheless, SIDS needed to have them on our side.

Mr Tabolo Kami (SIDS Network - SIDSNet) noted that **SIDSNet** had come a long way in terms of moving forward SIDS ability to use information and the connecting of experts and sharing of experiences. There was a SIDS development portal trying to get information to busy people, trying to add value to the agenda for BPOA implementation. Email news wire had also contributed to the documented regular increase in the hits. There was an opportunity now for expansion. SIDSNet will establish a closed library of documents. SIDS needed to leverage their smallness and limited capacity, so that what happens beyond these meetings will result in support for working groups across regions. Why SIDSNet or any net? Internet access was now much better in SIDS, while still expensive. Effective information strategies can now be developed. Development of success stories dissemination as well as being better able to manage information can be assisted by and through SIDSNet. The targeting of key policy makers, researchers and private enterprise was important, so that the challenge was clearly recognized that SIDS needed to move beyond the roundtables and to taking communications seriously. A good example was that of medical doctors in remote areas, who now used the Internet to extend the scope of research and training. Professional development opportunities can thus be brought closer to home. Wider participation in policy making could be established. One such example was a water learning project under development for the Pacific SIDS. Solutions were available, but how do we utilize them? A closed AOSIS network had been endorsed before, as had the regional working groups, recognizing existing networks. SIDS can do something with what they had, and to continue to press for support and assistance for what they did not have. It was not too ambitious to aim to ensure AOSIS had the best informed delegations. Finding information that was of value

and of good quality was important. Strategies for IT in SIDS would be limited, but guide and assistance could be sought through SIDSNet.

Questions and comments were raised by Malta, Saint Lucia, Papua New Guinea, Jamaica, and Dominica.

The **discussions** focused on the commitment that SIDS had to bring forward for sustainable development to become a reality. The need for a conducive international environment and partnerships had been a major thrust in the international negotiations. But there were different interpretations, by the OECD countries, and by developing countries. The trend of current investments benefited only a few developing countries. There were many voluntary agreements that corporations were expected to meet and fully to comply with. But they had no teeth. The challenges facing SIDS had not fundamentally changed since colonial days. The SIDS had only their communities. Somewhere along the way they had become disempowered. The people had to be involved in an integral way. Implementing Agenda 21 can only be a success with the help of civil society. Unless SIDS were able to stimulate entrepreneurs then it was difficult to have sustainable development. To empower people further there may be need to look at the functioning of national sustainable development councils. All the work that had gone in to the sustainable development debate for SIDS showed that we have not been able to communicate properly. The realities of the smaller and more distant countries was something we had to face. Conservation efforts should link more closely with good ecotourism businesses, and vice versa. There were isolated examples of best practices that must be combined with entrepreneurship. The world was now one of diminishing government power. The revolution in information communications technology must be made very important to SIDS communities, especially for civil society, so that the value of transparency was clear. The balance between government and society must be kept, recognizing also that forging partnerships was difficult because of the need to change attitudes. There was a need to show that we can work for the common good.

Session 5
SIDS – climate change, adaptation and renewable energy for SIDS

The session was chaired by **H.E. Ambassador Sotirios Zackheos**, Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations. He invited the speakers to be concise and direct.

Dr Leonard Nurse (Barbados) said that **climate change and the impact on SIDS** was now a matter of international consensus. The SIDS are the most vulnerable. In its Third Assessment Report (TAR), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had identified the mechanisms by which SIDS will be affected. Sea level rise will have significant effects, but there will be some differences depending on island type. A lot of erosion was known to be due to SIDS activities, but with a significant climate induced effect. It was known that there was no linear relationship to sea level rise and inundation levels. Compared to other communities, approximately 200 times more persons in SIDS will be at risk than at present. Bleaching of coral reefs was now an annual event. The

consequences to SIDS will be significant, such as on the tourism sector. The main issues were the need to manage SIDS resources, as it was clear that SIDS had not adequately mapped and catalogued an inventory of resources and their uses. We must define the resources, their location and spatial distribution, present status and trends. We must also have the tools for reducing coastal vulnerabilities, such as training in physical and chemical oceanography, data collection and serious research and the downscaling of climate models.

Mr Mohamed Khaleel (Maldives) wanted to raise the main issues of **vulnerability and the consequent adaptation plan of action from the point of view of the Maldives**. He presented the main findings of the Maldives national communications to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and showed the results of their investigation of the IPCC scenarios. Various scenarios could entail the complete loss of the capital Male, and other estimates looked at possible $17 million losses in tourism earnings. One area of concern was the fisheries sector, where it is well known that tuna catches were affected by sea temperatures. Freshwater resources were already under stress and will be further affected. Adaptation measures related to mainly coastal protection, and required a significant amount of planning. Maldives had now embarked on such a process to ensure that the necessary planning was in place. This required resources, training and financial support.

H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda – **Chairman of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)**) said that the CDM under **the Kyoto Protocol** had great significance for SIDS. The CDM was the only mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol that included developing countries. The origins of the CDM was a modest start, and it envisaged that the countries hosting CDM projects will advance their sustainable development. The CDM would ensure that host country projects would reduce emissions while contributing to their own sustainable development. The host would have a number of objectives such as defining its view of sustainable development. The governance of the CDM was through an Executive Board, at which AOSIS had a separate seat. Much intrigue went in to the decision on membership. As a Board member one must be nominated from a constituency but is expected to be serving in a personal capacity. There can be no financial interest in projects, and there was a non-disclosure agreement. The Executive Board will be required to make a number of recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties. A range of technical issues would need to be developed over the next few months. The importance of small scale projects especially for renewable energy had been set by limiting these by the energy output of 15 megawatts. The benefits for AOSIS was through the funding for building of capacity for the CDM and also through the adaptation fund. An amount of $250,000 would be made available for capacity needs assessments, with an equal amount available for planning. An adaptation fund will get a share of the proceeds, in the amount of 2%.

Mr K. Raghavan (Folkecenter) spoke of the work with the **Lakshadweep islands** north of Maldives, whose local government had declared a clear **policy for renewable energy**. The aim was for 100% renewable energy supply. The study had shown this to be possible by looking at the energy requirements, the energy supply and resources. There had been a big increase in diesel generating capacity in last few years. Much of the fossil fuel was

used for drying fish - called maas. Attempts had been made with solar power and also using a gasifier for coconut waste. A quantification of biomass available showed that a considerable amount was there. A mix of wind and solar power was sensible for these islands, and technologies needed to be sensitive to local conditions. Solar photovoltaic power was somewhat expensive and it was found that there was a need for a little bit of diesel, but considering also that this can come from bio-diesel or gasifiers. Seventy percent of the fossil fuels could be replaced using current technologies. There was a need to look carefully at the resources of SIDS, and to consider combined cycle methods. Efficiency was an important consideration. The concept of a project was currently being discussed. The idea was to establish the means of getting to actual implementation for one hundred percent renewables, through demonstration projects and training. Detailed data on the loads and the resources was needed for planning. Data collection had to be done in first phase. Training in installation, maintenance and manufacture, and the development of institutional structures and financing mechanisms followed. Assisting local agencies for planning purposes and energy auditing had to be factored in. Governments need to be proactive in promoting these innovations so that SIDS can gain greater self-sufficiency and move towards sustainable development.

Mr Joseph Hui (Singapore) noted that the **Singapore experience** was positive in regards to regulations for standard settings and in the promotion of energy efficiency. The need for environmental protection was paramount for SIDS, and had been realized at an early stage by Singapore's Government. The need to optimize existing use of energy resources gave very promising results, especially the combined cycle experience. The Government was now considering clean vehicle promotion. A lot of work was involved, in putting in place the necessary infrastructure for the use of CNG for vehicles. But fuel cell vehicles should also be introduced as soon as feasible. Solar thermal was limited by the cloud coverage in Singapore, but researchers were also studying the feasibility of these technologies being used in Singapore.

Professor Albert Binger (UWI) noted the need for a **SIDS energy agenda**. The debate in SIDS stressed the need for development, and while there were vulnerability concerns there was also the need for energy. For a number of years now energy was viewed from the perspective of survival as well as sustainable development. It was necessary to look at the current energy paradigm and to consider the potential for change. SIDS were paying too much for diesel and using it too inefficiently. For every dollar 60 cents go up in smoke. SIDS were not using abundant natural sources of energy, which through new technology applications had potential for industrial uses. SIDS productive sectors that consumed energy all had potential for change. Currently, for too many SIDS, the price of electricity was too expensive for competitive production. It would be sensible to begin the competition race in globalization by fixing our energy sector. Was it feasible, by looking at it as provision of services, as opposed to the energy itself? The energy sector in SIDS was set aside from, for example, tourism, transportation etc. This separation did not allow for synergistic links. Importing old used cars was inefficient. Electric vehicles were actually quite simple to use compared to combustion engines. Consideration should also be given to potential multiple uses in industry, such as biomass electricity from sugarcane used in the production of sugar. Sugarcane became the raw material as well as

the energy supply. Bio-gas was another issue of waste that was not utilized. The ability for finding synergy was very important. It was possible to use renewable energy, to promote recycling and to turn waste to energy or at least to reduce the amounts wasted. Current terms of trade made it harder for SIDS to be so dependent on fossil fuels. SIDS need to consider how to put forward the best policies and methods for themselves. The economic scale of project investment was a problem, and there was therefore a need to get the academic institutions to change, and to address the economic costs, social costs and environmental impacts. Access to energy services must be addressed if poverty was to be alleviated. The issue was about survival. SIDS needed to use their resources, generate employment and prevent the social and environmental upheavals. A SIDS energy agenda must include policy research on commercial and industrial uses of energy, performance standards and impact assessments on economic growth, and mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of information.

Questions and comments were raised by Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Fiji, Tuvalu, Dominica, and Jamaica, and UNDP and Palau Conservation Society.

In the **discussions**, the likely contribution of the CDM to the global reduction of emissions was elaborated. The need to limit the use of carbon sequestration was highlighted. SIDSNet would distribute reports of the work of the Executive Board. A Caribbean Initiative on Adaptation and Disaster Mitigation and a Climate Change Centre were also noted. The possibilities for stand-alone adaptation outside of the national communication was becoming a reality. The onus was on SIDS to make the planning. The development of regional centres had also received support from the UNFCCC process, and AOSIS must capitalize on the opportunities. It was stressed that adaptation to climate change and the promotion of safe renewable energy were key survival issues for SIDS, and that there needed to be a particular emphasis on these aspects. Energy and Finance Ministries must work together to integrate the process in national planning. Demonstration projects can assist by showing these principles of integration in a lot easier manner, for example, through virtual presentations. The idea of an inter-regional task force of AOSIS to take forward the planning of an energy agenda for SIDS was discussed, and it was noted that there needed to be a mandate to work on such developments by the time of the WSSD, and should include a need a new approach to energy management in SIDS, through education, policy analysis and planning.

The **Chairman** concluded that it was important that we continue to map out our strategies, in cooperation with industry, to enhance efficiency standards and alternatives. It was also a priority to promote optimal use of energy and economize the use of renewable energy, and cleaner energy to reduce the energy bill. It was of equal importance to promote coastal protection and education.

Session 6
Trade and sustainable development

Ambassador Slade chaired this session. He drew attention to the recent AOSIS workshop on trade, sustainable development and SIDS held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in December 2001 outcomes of the workshop.

Ms Diane Quarless (Jamaica) noted that trade was one of the emerging issues of great importance for SIDS. With the priorities for dealing with globalization, SIDS needed to strengthen their cooperation and institutional arrangements. The issues addressed at the Jamaica workshop related to tourism, agriculture, financing and regional cooperation. Many participants found it particularly useful to have discussions with the WTO and the AOSIS Geneva Missions. AOSIS was aware that the relationship of trade to multilateral environment agreements (MEA) were important, and that we require capacity building for supporting our trade agendas. The need for a stronger voice for SIDS in Geneva and at trade related meetings was highlighted. Consideration was given to the design of MEA and on how vulnerability of SIDS to trade shocks and to environmental factors could be addressed. The Doha Declaration implications will be subjected to study in relation to SIDS by many of our organizations, especially how to go about ensuring the special differential treatment for SIDS. The Jamaica workshop emphasized the facilitation of effective participation by SIDS, and the need for strengthening of capacity through a facility in Geneva.

The **Chairman** noted that there was a fairly detailed expose of the Jamaica workshop being finalized. The text will shortly be available to all AOSIS countries and workshop participants. The conclusions were in very large measure a reflection of the concerns raised in 1999 at the UN General Assembly special session on Barbados+5.

Comments were made by Mauritius, Saint Lucia and Nauru.

In the **discussions**, the importance of the trade issues to the WSSD process was noted. The WTO was charged with cooperating with the process. AOSIS must take the opportunity to take forward the matter of WTO interaction with the UN system. The ability to get differential treatment was ignored at WTO, as many of our SIDS were outside the meeting rooms, and most were not present. AOSIS will have to build up the case for SIDS within the umbrella of small and vulnerable economies (SVE). WTO when it granted special treatment did accord some flexibility, such as the considerations given to those which subsidized nuclear energy. Certain transition periods were granted to some countries, but not to SIDS at present. AOSIS should develop a consensus around a greater understanding of the concerns and constraints faced by SIDS. The basis and reasoning for SIDS requiring special treatment would need to be developed. It was also reiterated that capacity building on trade negotiation issues was greatly needed, and that there should be binding obligations on developed countries to assist SIDS and developing countries with such capacity building. The WTO should also regularize its relationship with the UN system and extend an appreciation for its system through dialogue.

Session 7
Financing for development

Ambassador Slade then moved the discussions on to the subject of financing for development, and the preparations underway in the work of the International Conference.

Mr George Talbot (Financing for Development Secretariat, DESA, UN) stated that in just a few weeks the **International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD)** will take place in Monterrey, Mexico. The logistics and the need to finalize the outcome document at the meeting will be the subject of intense work at the last PrepCom in New York from 21 January. A revised text that tried to capture the essential matters raised so far in the discussions had been issued. The outcome had yet to be defined in very precise terms, and it lacked some of the specificity and details. It was a challenge for AOSIS to really determine what was feasible and what the priorities for the group may be. It was important to work out the strategic objectives in the medium to long term for AOSIS. It was necessary to relate the process to the WSSD. Bringing the development dimension to the world of finance will be necessary if we are to seek the quality funding that sustainable development required. It was clear that there were overlaps and linkages. There was need to think about pursuing a development agenda, which can include the mobilization of resources and developing the right policies. Countries needed to look at the substantive possibilities. Foresight, perseverance and patience was needed, so as to promote AOSIS interests. Some of the features clearly gave hope for a more enlightened approach to development. The process so far offered a comprehensive view of financing for development. We are no longer looking solely at debt or poverty but at development issues in an integrated manner. The agenda was broad, arising mainly from points drawn from the developing world. There had been a high level of collaboration among the institutions. The process had underlined the need for stronger cooperation at the national level. The UN system was therefore seeking to promote coherence. Monterrey will be the first time that the UN will be having a dedicated conference for development finance, and it was important that AOSIS was involved.

Mr Amena Yauvoli (Fiji) noted that preparations for the **FfD Conference** had been a team effort for AOSIS. There were compelling reasons for the UN to address the distribution of global wealth and to seek to reduce the number of people living in poverty. The Millennium Declaration set goals, but there were also the statements by AOSIS leaders on sustainable development. Mobilization of domestic resources was seen as the main source of financing for development, but must be combined with foreign direct investment and official development assistance. Trade and debt re-financing were among the systemic issues of to be discussed, particularly from the aspect of global governance. There was a real need to promote equity in the decision making process at the international level. This must include recognition of the special situation of SIDS. The creation of a domestic enabling environment and fiscal incentives had been debated, and it was clear that Governments must also include all stakeholders. But this must all be met by the necessary international support. The UN played a critical role in this regard, so that the integrated framework that was desired should give full consideration to the three pillars of sustainable development. Foreign direct investment, while beneficial for some,

was a central challenge, as not all countries were able to attract the necessary foreign investment. Capacity issues had come in clearly in the discussion on trade that preceded the financing, and had also been raised at the UN. It was also clearly recognized that if debt was not properly treated it will remain a very damaging effect on SIDS economies. We therefore need a new international fund for meeting the Millennium Declaration targets. We need integration of the environment and responsible investments, and good corporate citizenship for the transnational corporations. The recognition of the BPOA as a blueprint for the sustainable development of SIDS, and the priority in fully implementing it, must be addressed by the conference. The challenge for AOSIS was both to formulate positions and to be determined in promoting SIDS concerns.

Ms Sonia Leonce-Carryl (Saint Lucia) believed the **FfD Conference** should have been the first ever conference to be convened by the UN. The agenda for the conference as very detailed, and out of this agenda there were some very different viewpoints. Developed countries viewed the issues from the perspectives of domestic resources and governance, and merely assisting the most needy like LDCs and Africa. AOSIS had emphasized the need for international responsibility, solidarity and assistance. This was a world of inter-dependence, and there had been a proliferation of conferences that had not been fully implemented. The developed countries were very critical of the basic paper, and had sought to emphasize national responsibility and downplayed the prominence of the Millennium goals. The G-77 was in agreement with the facilitator that there should be more emphasis on the equity issues. Monterrey was the beginning of a process, and will begin the development of many partnership proposals. AOSIS needed to continue to maintain its presence so that its concerns were addressed, and to maintain the references to SIDS in a balanced manner. The way forward was to seek coherence and innovation. There was a lot of pressure to have the document negotiated prior to Monterrey. It would be important for those delegates involved in WSSD to monitor the conference, to learn from what may occur. The main outstanding issue was the question of who will re-draft the negotiated outcome document. Will it be a group effort or the work of the co-chairs (Pakistan and Sweden)? This was the only opportunity for SIDS to have an input for financing for development, and we must be resolute, pragmatic and focused. A major signal will be put forward by this conference on the willingness of the developed world to assist developing countries.

Questions and comments were raised by Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados, and UWI.

In the **discussions,** it was noted that there had been considerable progress made. AOSIS may not have been able to get the same profile in the economic or trade area as in climate change, but this will hopefully change as a result of the FfD Conference and the new efforts in Geneva in respect of trade. It was also noted that offshore banking required full consideration, and that moves were afoot for this issue to be brought to the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) so that proper information on the economic impact of this sector on SIDS was available to the CDP.

Session 8
SIDS – land degradation

This session was chaired by **Ambassador Koh**.

Mr U Wan Lin (Convention to Combat Desertification - CCD) spoke on the work being done by the international community on desertification and its implementation in SIDS. The CCD now had 39 AOSIS members. Implementation of the CCD was being reviewed in 2002. The CCD was involved in the preparatory process of WSSD so as to ensure that its sustainable development aspects were kept on the agenda. Land degradation was included the reports so far. The Asia and Pacific region had highlighted that CCD needed to be implemented in the region, and that resources will be required. There were thematic program networks, such as on sand dunes, information, capacity building, etc. Sub-regional programs were being considered. The Apia meeting on CCD had called for national action plans to deal with drought. Awareness raising was very important. Article 8 of the CCD called for coordination with other conventions such as UNFCCC and CBD. National action plans required the involvement of all stakeholders. Articles 9 and 10 called for the national action plans to be linked with domestic sustainable development policies. Overall there were numerous benefits to SIDS in the CCD process, and countries that were no Parties should give careful consideration to this.

Mr Manuel Dengo (DESA) introduced the results of the **International Conference on Freshwater,** held in Bonn in 2001. It had been convened as a result of efforts by Germany, commenced at the 6th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The Bonn meeting had a wide representation of countries, main water organizations and civil society as well. There was limited participation by SIDS, yet there were a number of aspects to the conference results that SIDS should approach with a view to implementation in SIDS.

Professor Lino Briguglio (Islands and Small States Institute - Malta) introduced the work on the **vulnerability index** carried out by various organizations. Vulnerability was a common aspect of SIDS. It related to small size and degree of economic cooperation, dependence on exports, imports and insularity. Any economic activity on an island impacted on the environment. Although as a group SIDS were not the poorest in the world, all were very vulnerable. In terms of vulnerability, even successful countries can be termed vulnerable on the index, although the resilience of a country should be taken into account. A combination of vulnerability and resilience index would give a better representation of the state of the country. The environmental vulnerability index did seek to take resilience into account. It had been suggested that the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) should also take an openness index into account. The conclusion was clear in any case, that SIDS as a group tended to be more vulnerable than other groups of countries. The index drew attention to problems arising from vulnerability and also provided a simple value measurement. But it did have its weaknesses, and these related to the choice of measurement and the weighting of the various factors.

Dr Russell Howorth (South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission - SOPAC - Fiji) gave a presentation on the **development of an Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI).** The aim was to develop an index that gave a relatively quick and inexpensive way to capture the vulnerability. The current database of countries was small, and there was still a need to increase participation of countries in order to establish the index as a global one. The three pillars of sustainable development were social, economic and the environment. Linking of the EVI to economic and social aspects remained key, as the underpinning element of any development was the environment. Once the data was made available the variables could be used to get the best impact for the purposes of the individual SIDS. The new tendency towards a vulnerability profile could also be used. The idea now was to review progress and to move on to the actual implementation of the EVI, and to make a robust model to be used in practice. The countries had expressed the wish to have a demonstration of vulnerability compared to other groups. One reason why the CDP had not taken on the EVI was because the data bases had taken on different measures. It would now be important that issues to be covered were related to data access and completeness. Validating the data will be important, as will be the quality control. There must be commitment to doing the necessary tasks to complete the EVI, and officials in SIDS working on the project must have the authority to ask Ministries to do their part and provide the data. We need to get the EVI accepted as a tool. By later this year this should be possible. But this will require a global database. The social aspects of human and environmental welfare needed to be brought in, and in this way the EVI can be seen as more than a SIDS tool.

Dr Len Ishmael (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - **ECLAC**) noted that their work on **a social vulnerability index** was at the fledgling stage. The lack of data on which to inform social policy decision-making had necessitated that this task be carried out. The Dutch government had provided funding, and terms of reference were now being worked on. There was a dearth of social data, and there is a need to bolster the weighting of the social components to really show the true vulnerability of SIDS. The construction of a database at ECLAC to input all the data that was available was in the final planning stage. It will look at issues like levels of crime and education. It will require organizations to involve social scientists rather than just statisticians. As a start, preliminary social vulnerabilities will be discussed in the work to be commenced in a few months by ECLAC.

Professor Albert Binger (UWI and member of the **Committee for Development Policy**) stated that the decisions of the CDP to move countries from LDC to developing country status was a discussion which the economists dominated, and they preferred numbers such as GDP per capita. Graduation deprived countries of certain benefits, such as priority financing and assistance and concessional trade agreements. Access to technical assistance was equally important. The example of Maldives was mentioned. Maldives, having attained a level of GDP and maintained it, was now faced with graduation. Graduation would mean taking away benefits from a country that was in peril for its survival. What was the true meaning of graduation? Was a LDC moving to developing country status now truly capable of independent competitiveness? There needed to be a thorough consideration of establishing a process of gradual graduation.

Are there weaknesses in the assessment of the criteria? Yes there are, and there must be better ways of dealing with the numbers, and for taking account of natural disasters. The ways of thinking on vulnerability must assess this. Financial assistance to developing countries was constantly declining, while economic expansion had been growing. How do we minimize the demands on donors? Do we continue to support the rules of the process or push for issues that better reflected the true situation of SIDS?

Questions and comments were raised by Fiji, Dominica, and Samoa, and UNDP.

In the **discussions**, the ways and means of strengthening the SIDS Unit was debated. The need to have composite vulnerability indices completed was stressed. The effect of climate change on rainwater or freshwater was also discussed. The transfer of funds to developing countries, and the need for a flexible approach to graduation that took account of the situation of small economies should be recommended to these institutions, so as to consider the performance of a graduating country and a procedure for analysis.
It was also noted that the nature of the weather patterns changing was of more importance to EVI than the actual sea level rise points. As for process, AOSIS needed to continue championing the EVI and to request the international level of attention to it.

Session 9
Oceans

Ambassador Koh, Chairman of the session, noted that the oceans are vital to SIDS and to their self-identity and culture. It had impacts and benefits and affected the lives of all SIDS communities in the most fundamental ways .

The Honorable Judge Jose Luis Jesus (International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea - ITLOS) spoke of the evolution of the modern law of the sea. At the end of the 14th century there was agreement that there were indeed international boundaries on the oceans. Not until the end of World War II was there really a need for any more formalized agreement as the conflicts of the time were of a particular nature. The need for international maritime law became more apparent as uses of the oceans expanded. In the context of legal drafting there was eventually a need for a 3rd UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). He noted the distinguished personal contribution of Ambassador Koh, and his role as President of the Conference. A comprehensive regime was established by which States can now claim 200 mile exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and a territorial sea on 12 miles. All States, big or small, had the same rights. There were two basic categories of SIDS, in terms of ocean space. There was a linked regime of islands, seas and seabed as well as the airspace. Seabed was also considered in the context of its continental shelf. Countries needed to fulfil some criteria under the Convention to claim a continental shelf. High seas was then the column of water beyond the 200 mile EEZ. Some SIDS qualified for archipelagic waters. Only SIDS that were archipelagos can claim this, and there was need to ensure that the waters enclosed were not be more than nine times the landmass. There were three main points that SIDS must consider. The BPOA referred to the concerns of SIDS about the transportation of nuclear materials through their waters, in accordance with international law – something of a contradiction. If there were a disaster, the fact of the matter was that the entire territory of

a small island country was likely to be destroyed. So SIDS must also consider the polluter pays principle. SIDS sustainable development was entirely dependent on sustainable ocean management. SIDS must be consistent in putting pressure for this principle to become international law. Sea level rise was another consideration, which was at the heart of the very survival of SIDS. The perverse effect was that it could affect the SIDS territorial claims. SIDS would lose landmass as well as EEZ and the resources contained therein. There could be huge losses. An approach to stopping this would be to work on an agreement for decisions on SIDS baselines remaining as they were from the time of ratification of UNCLOS. The final consideration was the living resources of the oceans, and the trend towards over-fishing in the high seas. There was a very adverse effect from this on SIDS EEZ resources. A code of conduct for responsible fisheries and the need to address illegal and unregulated fishing and unsustainable practices had been developed but need urgent and complete implementation. Compliance agreements for flag States were also very important to ensure that there was a responsible approach to management.

Professor Robert Beckman (National University of Singapore) had looked at the major **international agreements that addressed sustainable development issues relating to oceans and SIDS**. In this context there was a long history pertaining to the oceans and law of the sea, but only with a first formal codified combination from the time of the Stockholm Conference in 1972. There was a common theme to require compliance with UNCLOS, and with other international treaties. It was not enough to look at this from rights of States, but also all the related treaties that impact on sustainable development. Ocean uses must be the domain of more than Ministries of Environment, and must also bring in fisheries authorities and land use planners. The imperative was to have coherent management of coastal zones and islands, and integration. Coral reefs were the critical biodiversity for SIDS. The basic sovereign rights to sustainable development of the EEZs was not just a question of rights to that area, but were also subject to all sorts of access issues. The straddling Fish Stocks Agreement should become a high priority for ratification by the distant water fishing nations (DWFNs). Flag States must regulate their fleets, for stewardship and management. There must be pressure from SIDS to have the DWFNs contribute to sustainable development. Lack of legal resources in SIDS meant that many of them did not adequately cover the operation of many treaties, such as the IMO. It was recommended that SIDS should ratify civil liability conventions. Nuclear issues will be vigorously opposed by the developed countries, but SIDS must still make certain that the risks were assessed and that safety and security prevailed. A decision to put pressure on transporting countries was probably easier to carry through than legal challenges. Land based sources of pollution needed to be considered. SIDS need to construct marine protected areas which, if placed within EEZ, can be allowed as additional reason to restrict passage. Particularly sensitive sea areas such as in Cuba and the Great Barrier Reef had been able to get special consideration.

Ambassador Peter D. Donigi (Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations) stressed the need to look at the **development issues for oceans from a holistic point of view** rather than a protectionist mindset. Like ancient warriors we need to have vision and a panoramic view of our surroundings. There were many negative

aspects that SIDS representatives often stressed. We must move away from the language of need. We must develop our resources. The known resources available to SIDS from the ocean were in three parts – ocean space, sea floor and non-living. The action that was required for oceans space resources related to fish, water, salt and energy. The Pacific countries received a paltry one percent of the market value of the tuna caught from their waters. Was this equitable? The export value did not appear on SIDS books, and was thus not considered when SIDS dealt with lenders and investors. As it was not landed in the territory of SIDS, they lost much needed revenue. Assistance to SIDS was now required, and had finally received recognition from the Fish Stocks resolution at the UN. The talk of over-capacity of fishing fleets related to developed countries, and it was important to keep that clearly in mind, as SIDS capacity was still low. Sea floor resources required SIDS research into the availability and strength of what SIDS had rights to. For non-living resources there was some understanding of the nodules, but it required some concerted action to get at the information held by other countries. Coordination of SIDS efforts will be important. A number of steps needed to be considered, in terms of claims that SIDS can make on the continental shelf and maritime boundaries. Regions should consider setting up regional seismology studies, and to investigate the potential for bio-prospecting and marine science research. There was a lack of mapping of, for example, sea mounts, and there were many examples of research that could result in gains in sustainable development for SIDS. There were also aspects that related to tourism such as whale watching in conservation areas. Bio-pesticides can possibly be developed from ocean biota. Therefore we need to have marine resource management research right through to production, and not just the raw materials. Countries should also give thorough consideration to understanding how these impacted on our sustainable development. Through the development of regional investment funds, compensated by DWFN and through an increase in the licensing fees to at least 5%, SIDS should be able to turn around healthy profits from their ocean resources. SIDS should find innovative means of having ownership of the resources and the benefits, and so seek the elimination of the needs syndrome.

Mr Learie Miller (Jamaica) had looked at **land-based sources of pollution** and the case for stewardship. A Global Program of Action (GPA) was in place and was getting greater recognition. The priority for SIDS was to deal with a growing problem that was very real. The noted the example of the problems of Kingston Harbour, and said the Government had recognized that this was mostly from land-based pollution. These pollution sources posed particular problems for SIDS, and there were significant implications for economic development. Kingston had a large harbour, with multiple uses, but the sitting of industries and sewage had resulted in major impact on the harbour. Beaches in the area were no longer useable, and the fisheries had markedly declined. The reality was that there were multiple agencies involved in certain aspects of the pollution, but no one had the overarching authority. And that was what the Government was now seeking to change. Far greater attention needed to be placed on our land-based activities. Appropriate stewardship and integrated mechanisms that allowed for integrated consideration of problems such as those affecting the Kingston Harbour were also needed.

The **Chairman** summed up, thanked all presenters, then adjourned the meeting to allow the working groups to meet, and for these to report their findings to an open-ended drafting group chaired by Ambassador Ashe.

Closing session

The **session was co-chaired by Ambassador Koh and Ambassador Slade**.

Ambassador Ashe introduced the text from the drafting group. A line by line consideration was carried out, and amendments from the floor were proposed and accommodated. It was agreed that because of the shortage of time, the section entitled the 'Singapore Declaration' would be adopted by the meeting, and that the 'priorities and initiatives' section would be developed further by an AOSIS task force.
The meeting then adopted the **Singapore Declaration** (attached hereto).

In his closing remarks, **Ambassador Slade,** on behalf of the participants, thanked Ambassador Koh for the time he had devoted to the meeting and for his insights and guidance; and expressed the sincere gratitude of AOSIS and all participants to the Government of Singapore and the Ministry of Environment for the magnificent arrangements and most generous hospitality throughout the week-long meeting. The programme of the meeting and the presentations were such that it had indeed been a process of significant capacity building for all participants. He acknowledged with deep appreciation the very generous financial contributions of the Government of Singapore, and from the UNDP and the Government of Norway, all of which made possible the holding of this important meeting. He thanked all participants, and expressed special appreciation to the UN DESA, and to Mr Manuel Dengo and Mr Espen Ronneberg of the SIDS Unit in particular, for their continuing support and vital assistance to the AOSIS countries.

Ambassador Koh thanked the informal bureau of the meeting for its assistance. He hoped that the delegates would leave Singapore with two central messages - that we have hope in our hearts and that with willpower we can force changes. Economic development was possible without environmental degradation. And while he felt that many SIDS suffered from an excess of modesty, partly for their small size, SIDS were not condemned to stay poor because of their relative smallness. With political will small island communities can overcome their problems, and turn their limited resources into an advantage.

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SINGAPORE DECLARATION OF THE ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES INTER-REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS),

Having met in Singapore from 7 to 11 January 2002;

Reaffirming the objectives and commitments of the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development and Agenda 21, the Bridgetown Declaration and the Barbados Program of Action on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (BPOA) and the outcome of the 22nd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UN GA);

Being aware that the process of analysis and evaluation of Agenda 21, leading to the Johannesburg Summit, is important to the fulfilment of commitments and the implementation of measures previously agreed by the international community at Rio for mitigating and addressing the urgent problems of sustainable development;

Recognizing that the BPOA represents a concrete expression of Agenda 21, and that Agenda 21, the BPOA and the outcome of the 22nd Special Session of the UN GA embody a number of principles, which provide the international community with clear guidelines for the promotion of the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and take account of their unique characteristics and circumstances, and their economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities;

Noting the commonalities of priority issues for sustainable development particular to SIDS in sub-regional and regional submissions made by SIDS regions to the WSSD;

Recalling that SIDS are recognized as a special case and deserving of special treatment because they are ecologically fragile and economically vulnerable, they face particular constraints in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, and their specific physical circumstances often make it difficult for them to benefit from global economic development;

Recognizing that SIDS possess unique human, natural and cultural wealth and constitute a crucial part of world heritage;

Recognizing also that the primary effort in the implementation of the BPOA has been carried out by SIDS themselves;

Emphasizing that issues for action identified in the BPOA in particular climate change, oceans, energy, transportation, tourism, natural resources and biodiversity, natural and man-made disasters, and land degradation remain priorities for implementation;

Concerned that new and emerging challenges notably globalization and trade liberalization, the spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as the continued lack of financial resources and institutional and human capacity, access to and use of ICT continue to compromise the ability of SIDS to achieve sustainable development;

Underscoring that poverty remains a major problem affecting the capacity of many SIDS to achieve sustainable development, compromising their ability to provide basic physical and social services such as basic education, health care, nutrition, water and sanitation; and sustainable human settlements;

Reaffirming the critical importance of intensified existing and new efforts for capacity building for SIDS;

Emphasizing the need for renewed international action on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, as stated in the Rio Declaration, and reaffirming the vision that global and regional challenges for sustainable development demand the harmonization of positions among all countries;

Recognizing that several SIDS have pursued a number of development options including inter alia international financial services to diversify their economies and participate in global trade in services;

Bearing in mind that the High Level International Conference on Financing for Development is to be held from 12-18 March 2002 at Monterrey, Mexico, and expecting that its outcomes will positively contribute to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD);

Reaffirming the importance that SIDS attach to actively participating in the preparatory process leading to the WSSD;

Welcoming the continued efforts of AOSIS to enhance the participation of SIDS in negotiations of multilateral environmental and trade agreements and to promote the sustainable development of SIDS, including in the implementation of the BPOA;

Welcoming also the initiative by the Government of Singapore, in its effort to help increase the capacity of developing countries and SIDS, in particular, in the field of sustainable development and management of the environment, to establish an Environment Academy;

Affirming the importance of partnerships with the private sector and local communities and recognizing that all major groups have a role to play in advancing sustainable development

Have agreed to:

Call for international support to facilitate the active participation of SIDS in the preparatory process leading to the WSSD and the Summit itself;

Accelerate national and regional implementation of the BPOA, and to request the international community to provide adequate financial resources, transfer of appropriate, environmentally sound technologies and assistance for capacity-building for such national and regional implementation, as agreed in Agenda 21, the BPOA and the outcomes of the 22nd Special Session of the UN GA;

Call for the establishment and identification of the necessary resources for a global capacity building initiative, learning from the experience of ongoing initiatives including Capacity 21 and the GEF CDI, by 2003. This initiative should be coordinated across the UN system and engage national, sub-regional and regional institutions and mechanisms for delivery and support;

Support the strengthening and further enhancement of the significant partnership between civil society and the public sector in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the BPOA;

Encourage urgent international and domestic action to address climate change and its consequences through *inter alia*, the early ratification, entry into force and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, public awareness, mobilization of resources for adaptation, promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures and capacity building;

Reiterate the call on the international community to support and strengthen existing and new capacity building efforts of SIDS in all its aspects, and strengthen co-operation among SIDS particularly in the area of technical co-operation for sustainable development by supporting SIDS initiatives, as exemplified by Singapore's initiative in setting up an Environment Academy to further SIDS inter-regional collaboration on environmental training;

Urge the international community to put in place appropriate mechanisms to support SIDS in their efforts to adjust to globalization and trade liberalization, and call on the WTO to recognize the special situation of SIDS and ensure that in the elaboration of its Work Program on Small Economies as a follow-up to the Doha Ministerial Declaration, it takes due account of the difficulties encountered by SIDS, including effective operationalization of special and differential treatment, and capacity building initiatives;

Seek to establish a global sustainable energy program, that can ensure that adequate, affordable and environmentally safe energy is available to promote the sustainable development of SIDS, including the strengthening of the institutional arrangements within the UN system to assist and support SIDS in their efforts to achieve sustainable energy development and promote renewable energy and energy efficiency;

Call for the mobilization of new and additional resources, including foreign direct investment, official development assistance and debt relief, as well as innovative mechanisms for the financing of development in SIDS;

Call also for special financial mechanisms or instruments to enable SIDS to enhance their national capacity to develop or exploit their resources in a sustainable manner;

Establish policies and frameworks to foster innovative partnerships for micro, small and medium enterprises, including specially earmarked revolving financial mechanisms and supportive human resource development initiatives to revitalize rural productive capacity, and to enhance the competitiveness of the rural sector and stimulate employment opportunities;

Call for the establishment or strengthening of policy and programs to manage the ocean resources and jurisdictions in a sustainable manner, the development of holistic island system management and ecosystem-based management approaches at the national level, the promotion of an integrated management approach through a regional oceans and seas policy with access to appropriate technology, data management systems and related research and capacity building;

Call also for the early operationalization of the economic and environmental vulnerability indices for the promotion of sustainable development of SIDS and other vulnerable states, and the use of these indices at the levels of inter-governmental and international agencies, as well as international support for the development of a social vulnerability index to complement this work;

Call further on the international community to provide technical and financial assistance to enhance the ICT infrastructure of SIDS, and to further develop SIDSNet and other regional initiatives and networks;

Request that the preparatory process recommend that the WSSD reaffirms the necessity of implementing fully the BPOA as a matter of urgency;

Request also that the preparatory process recommend that the WSSD adopt a decision for a comprehensive review conference on the BPOA in the year 2004 (Barbados+10);

Agree to establish an open-ended consultative contact group of AOSIS to further formulate the set of priority issues and initiatives on the basis of the work begun during the AOSIS Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting;

Submit this Declaration to the preparatory process for its full consideration.